

would increase our own security because free people with democratic governments do not have time or the inclination to go to war with each other, to break their word, or to otherwise meddle in things that undermine human potential. They are always too busy trying to increase the human potential of those whom they represent. But it has been said that a hungry man is not a free man. So if we seek freedom and democracy, we must first also seek to meet the basic needs that God meant for all people to have met in this world, wherever they live, whatever their race, whatever their station, especially the children.

Let me say to you that I have had a marvelous time with President Mandela. We have talked about a lot of things. We have told stories. One of the things that I find that our cultures have in common is the compulsion of its politicians to tell good jokes, often on themselves. *[Laughter]* We've even discussed the history of boxing in the world over the last 60 years, something the President knows a good deal more about than I do, although I knew enough to keep up.

Let me close with this thought. Nelson Mandela, perhaps his most remarkable achievement was that he spent 27 years as a prisoner and came out the freest of all people.

And so I say to you, Mr. President, as we part for the last time and I go about my business and you go about yours, this morning I awoke before dawn, thinking about the meeting we would have today. And I asked God to free me of all the petty resentments, the negative thoughts, all the things that crowd in on all of us who believe from time to time that life is not exactly as it should be and get frustrated when we cannot make it that way. Because neither I nor anyone else I have ever known has ever faced the spiritual crisis you must have faced so many times, and with each succeeding week and month and year, you reached deeper and deeper and deeper in yourself for the ultimate truth. As you have fed your spirit, let us feed the world.

Congratulations, sir, and thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:56 p.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Queen Noor of Jordan, member, and Robert Chester, chair, board of directors, The Hunger Project; former United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, chairman, and Koji Kakizawa, member, Africa Prize international jury; Joan Holmes, president, The Hunger Project; and Emeka Anyaoku, Secretary General of the British Commonwealth.

## Remarks at the Senator George Mitchell Scholarship Fund Dinner October 5, 1994

Thank you very much. Senator Cohen, Senator Dole, Senator Mitchell, my fellow Americans. I've already heard enough tonight to build the speeches for the next year on. *[Laughter]*

First of all, I come here in all sincerity to say that I believe if the decision were made on the merits, Bob Dole and not George Mitchell would be the baseball commissioner, because Bob Dole is much better at keeping his team out on strike. *[Laughter]* I also have to tell you that I really admire Bill Cohen. They call me Slick Willie—*[laughter]*—I mean, he's so erudite, you know, he writes all these books—stands up there and smiles at Senator Dole with that little twist of the head and says, "I'm one of those errant ones." That's right, I have gotten one vote out of him in the last 2 years. *[Laugh-*

*ter]* Bill's last book was called "Murder in the Senate." The longer I stay here, the more appealing that book gets. *[Laughter]*

I will never forget the night George Mitchell said he just had to tell me something. I thought he was going to give me another piece of advice, tell me how I was messing up, talk about how we were going to achieve the Elysian Fields. And then he said he wasn't going to run for reelection. It's really—it's not very pleasant to see a grown man cry anytime, especially when it's the President. *[Laughter]* I begged; I pleaded; I wept. I called him back in the middle of the night, and I got him up, and I thought maybe he would be in a weakened condition, you know, if I woke him up. *[Laughter]* I have one last idea. I will ask Ken Burns to do a

special on the Senate and scrap “Baseball” if Mitchell will stay in the Senate, and then he can be the star. *[Laughter]* And I called Burns about it today. And he said, “I like this. You know,” he said, “when I did this baseball thing, it was a retrospective on decade after decade. But I could do one on the Senate in real time, and it would just seem like decade after decade.” *[Laughter]*

Well, anyway, I’m about adjusted to the fact that George won’t be around next year, but I want to say seriously, I don’t believe that any of us would function very well in this town if we tried to do anything on our own. One of the reasons I ran for President is I thought this country was too divided. I thought we needed a greater spirit of partnership. I thought people had either excessive or too restricted notions about the Government and that we didn’t work together very well.

Ironically, I was elected to President of this country without knowing the majority leader of the Senate very well. But I could never have asked for a better partner. Last year, despite all the smoke and mirrors and conflict, according to Congressional Quarterly, it was the most successful year of partnership between a President and a Congress since the end of World War II, except for 1953, President Eisenhower’s first year, and 1965, President Johnson’s first year after his election.

Now, that was in no small measure because of George Mitchell. And there are a lot of things that we can rejoice about, even where we disagreed with the methods. The country’s deficit’s gone down 2 years in a row for the first time in 20 years, and next year will make 3 years in a row for the first time since Mr. Truman was here. We passed NAFTA. We passed national service, something that I’m convinced may revolutionize America from the grassroots up. We reorganized the student loan program, and now millions of middle class young people can afford to go to college and need not shy away from it. In every State in this country and every community, there is somebody who’s got a job or access to an apprenticeship program or a better student loan or a place in a Head Start program or a childhood immunization because of the labors of George Mitchell in the last year and a half alone.

I cannot tell you what it has meant to me to have the honor of working with him on a daily basis. He has this almost magical blend

of ability and discipline, of pragmatism and principle, of flexibility and fight. His powers of concentration and persuasion are legion. He really does bring a sense of balance to every debate. No matter how strongly I feel something, if he thinks I’m wrong, I’m afraid to talk to him because I think there’s a 90 percent chance he will convince me that I had it all wrong all along. I don’t know why he’s not that persuasive with Senator Dole. *[Laughter]*

He is truly a leader in the best sense. He has vision. He tries to get things done that he believes are right. He has the skill to do it, but because he’s never lost the common touch, he’s able to keep the trust and the confidence of the people who sent him here.

You know, I was watching that film, and there was a picture of George along toward the end of the film sitting at a plant in his shirtsleeves, talking to the workers. Now, every one of us who ever ran for office in any State in America has had a picture taken like that. But if you’ve looked at as many of those films as I have, you can tell the people who went there for the first time when they were in the shot and the people who just do it all the time and would just as soon be there as on the floor of the Senate. George Mitchell is the latter category.

I have made a joke to many of you that of all the Members of Congress, from the freshmen to the most senior, the Republicans and the Democrats, George Mitchell is the only person who never comes to the White House without some young person from his home State in tow. I honestly believe—you know, Maine’s not a very big State, and I can appreciate that. Mitchell’s been here 14 years; I believe he has personally brought enough people to the White House that he could never be defeated, just because of them, their parents, their spouses, and their siblings. He couldn’t lose. I don’t know how he’s ever had time to go to the meetings; he’s always so busy making sure I don’t miss my picture with a person from Maine. *[Laughter]* Just this week he was here, and I almost got back in the White House, and I thought, “He forgot.” And I was walking to the door, and he said, “Wait a minute, wait a minute, Mr. President. Here’s somebody from my home State I want you to meet.” *[Laughter]* And it’s become a joke between us now. And we’re all laughing about it, but I tell you, the most important thing for all of us is to never forget who sent us here. And if you’re President in this

day and age and you try to do anything, you've got to be willing to be misunderstood from time to time. I often tell people, and I try to actually feel this way every day, that the important thing for us is not what the American people think of us every day but whether we think of them every day. George Mitchell has thought of the people who sent him here every day he has been here for 14 years. I have no doubt of that.

Let me just say one last thing. A lot of the things that we say around here, we say so often that they seem trite-sounding, and then we stop saying them because they lose their feeling. But you cannot be an immigrant's child in this country and become majority leader of the Senate; you cannot rise from the roots that Senator Dole came out of in Russell, Kansas; you can't be somebody like me who had the privilege—and I mean this sincerely—for a brief period in my early childhood to live in a place that didn't have any indoor plumbing, so I never got to forget what other people had to live like, and have the gifts that we have been given without knowing that our primary obligation is not to solve every problem that is before us but to

leave this country well enough off that the American dream is still alive for everybody that comes after us.

And that is why this scholarship tonight is so important to me, because you could not do anything for George Mitchell that would be more fitting. It's better than a statue. It's better than a plaque. It's better than an endowment for some other purpose, because what you are doing is giving him a chance in his name to create other George Mitchells, to give other young people a chance to live out their dreams, and to prove that the dream that made him what he is is still alive and real in this country today.

I thank you for that, because I have known very few Americans that remotely embodied the qualities of this country in their purest sense as well as George Mitchell does. And this gift you have given him does that as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Senator Mitchell.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:13 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

## Remarks Aboard the U.S.S. *Eisenhower* in Norfolk, Virginia October 6, 1994

*The President.* Thank you very much, Secretary Perry, Admiral Miller, Admiral Owens, Admiral Flanagan, Admiral Murphy, Captain Gemmill, and to all of you who are here. It's a great honor for me to be here. I asked to see the person responsible for decorating the F-14 with my name and the Vice President's name there. I guess I'm going to have to take flying lessons.

*Audience member.* He's right here, Mr. President, Skipper Al Myers.

*Comdr. Alan Myers.* Al Myers, sir.

*The President.* Thank you very much. I appreciate it. I told someone to take a picture of that, and I'm going to take it back to the Vice President when I see him this afternoon and suggest that we both take flying lessons. [*Laughter*] Admiral Miller said, "You understand on that plane, you would still control the eject seat." [*Laughter*] And I told him, "I don't be-

lieve in ejecting. I'd never bail out." But I was glad to know that.

I thank you all for your service. I'm pleased and honored to be with you today. I understand that some of you have actually chosen to come back from your leave to be a part of this ceremony, and I'm deeply grateful for yet another expression of your devotion to your country. I am proud of the job you have done, proud of the great work that all of our troops are doing in Haiti. And on behalf of the American people, the most important message I have to you today is a simple, straightforward, heartfelt thank you.

I also want to thank, especially, Captain Gemmill and the crew of this magnificent carrier for the "I Like Ike" button. You know, you may think that's funny, since he was a Republican and I'm a Democrat, but—[*laughter*]—when I was born, President Truman was President. But obviously, I was an infant; I didn't